Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (original) A method of layered encoding, comprising:

(a) applying a base layer perceptual filter to a signal to yield a base layer filtered signal;

(b) finding a base layer estimate for said signal by base layer error minimization with said base layer filtered signal; and

(c) finding a first enhancement layer estimate for said signal by error minimization with a first enhancement layer perceptual filter applied to an error in said base layer after inverse filtering with said base layer perceptual filter,

(d)   for j = 2, ..., N, finding a jth enhancement layer estimate for said signal by error minimization with a jth enhancement layer perceptual filter applied to an error in said (j-1)st enhancement layer after inverse filtering with said (j-1)st enhancement layer perceptual filter, wherein at least one of said jth enhancement layer perceptual filters is weaker than said base layer perceptual filter.

Claim 2 (original) The method of claim 1, wherein:

(a) said estimates are synthesis filtered CELP excitations.

Claim 3 (original) A layered encoder, comprising:

(a) an estimator for each layer of a layered encoder; and

(b) perceptual filters including inverse filters for each layer, wherein at least one of said layer perceptual filters is weaker than another of said layer perceptual filters.

Claim 4 (original) A method of decoding a layered encoded signal, comprising:

(a) applying a short-term postfiltering to a synthesized layered encoded signal wherein the short-term postfiltering differs for at least two of the number of layers decoded to form said synthesized layered encoded signal.

Claim 5 (original) A method of decoding a layered encoded signal, comprising:

(a) applying a long-term postfiltering to a synthesized layered encoded signal wherein the long-term postfiltering is independent of the number of layers decoded to form said synthesized layered encoded signal.